The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCHIFF addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO, addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. FOLEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. FOLEY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WATSON of California, addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

INTRODUCING LEGISLATION TO STRENGTHEN NUCLEAR SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING PROGRAMS AT AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES, COLLEGES, AND NATIONAL LABORATORIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation to strengthen nuclear science and engineering programs at American universities, colleges, and National Laboratories.

Nuclear science and engineering in the United States is a 50-year-old success story that has been written by some of the brightest minds the world has ever known. America has truly been blessed as the world leader in this area. But even as there is renewed interest in nuclear energy as one of the solutions to our Nation's energy problems, there are fewer Americans entering the nuclear science and engineering field, and even fewer institutions left with the capacity to train them.

In fact, the supply of 4-year-trained nuclear scientists has hit a 35-year low, and there are only 28 universities that operate research reactors, less than half the number there were in 1980.

□ 1845

These statistics tell but the beginning of the story, however. Current projections are that 25 percent to 30 percent of the nuclear industry's workforce and 76 percent of the nuclear workforce at our national laboratories are eligible to retire in the next 5 years. And a majority of the 28 operating university reactors will have to be relicensed in the next 5 years, a lengthy process that most universities cannot afford.

When I consider these facts, I wonder how long we can continue the success story that is nuclear science in the United States. Not long is my guess, and that is why action must be taken to reverse this troubling trend.

That is why I am introducing the Department of Energy University Nuclear Science and Engineering Act. This legislation is the House companion bill to legislation introduced in the Senate by my friend and colleague, Senator JEFF BINGAMAN.

This bill provides financial support for the operation, maintenance, and improvement of expensive, yet essential, university nuclear research reactors; resources for the professional development of faculty in the field of nuclear science and engineering; incentives for students to enter the field and opportunities for education and training through fellowships and interaction with national laboratory staff; and general research funds for students, faculty and national laboratory staff.

Now, more than ever, nuclear scientists and engineers are needed for much more than simply operating nuclear power plants. Trained in American universities and national laboratories, these specialists are needed to help design, safely dispose of, and monitor nuclear waste, both civilian and military; to develop radio isotopes for the thousands of medical procedures performed every day; to operate and maintain the Nation's existing fission reactors and nuclear power plants; to help stem the proliferation of nuclear weapons and respond to any future nuclear crisis worldwide; and to design, operate, and monitor current and future naval reactors.

These are not small tasks, but if we continue on the path we are on, there will not be enough people to do the job down the line.

The legislation I am introducing today incorporates a number of approaches recommended by reports from the National Research Council, the Department of Energy and its Nuclear Energy Research Advisory Committee, all leaders in the nuclear field. The bill advances four components essential to strong nuclear science and engineering programs: students, faculty, facilities, and finally research.

Mr. Speaker, my written statement goes into greater detail about these components, so I want to conclude by saying that this legislation is important, not only to a handful of American universities, but to our national labs, our industry, our Navy, our national security and those engaged in life-saving medical research involving radiation.

This legislation ensures that America continues to realize the benefits of a competent, well-trained, highly skilled nuclear workforce. More important, this bill is critical if we are to maintain America's standing as number one in the world in the area of nuclear science and engineering.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle who are cosponsors of this important legislation, including the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN), the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. BARTLETT), the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KNOLLENBERG), the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS), the gentleman from Idaho (Mr. SIMPSON), the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. HOOLEY), the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Mrs. WILSON), the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STRICKLAND), the gentleman from Idaho (Mr. OTTER), and the gentleman from California (Mr. CALVERT).

Mr. Speaker, I urge the rest of my colleagues to join us in this endeavor by cosponsoring the bill.

TROPICAL STORM ALLISON

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. STERNS). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to talk about the recent flooding in my hometown of Houston and the devastation it has caused. I know the national news has covered some of it, but watching my colleagues around the country with their devastation in previous years, I had no idea until this last week and this last weekend what major flood waters can do.

Starting last Tuesday, June 5, Tropical Storm Allison made landfall on the Southeast Texas coastline, bringing with it 5 days of rain and damages estimated to be $1 billion or more and the countless loss of property and disruption of people's lives and as many as 20 people have lost their lives.

While many areas of Houston and Harris County have significant flooding, our 29th district, that I am honored to represent, was hit particularly hard, because of the residential nature of our district. Many of the city's bayous run through our district, and two of these bayous, Hunting and Greens bayous, overflowed their banks causing widespread flooding.

Over 10,000 residents were forced to leave their homes by Greens Bayou alone, as flooding in the area reached a 1,000 year level. Even those who were not flooded out of their homes suffered thousands of dollars worth of damage to their homes in personal belongings.

The damage from this storm, however, is not limited just to our residential areas. The whole community has been hit, area hospitals, not only our regional hospitals on Interstate 10, but